

his conscience with the apprehension that it might be absolutely the truth of God, that, under this uninviting form, he was loath to embrace. Unaided by such an impression already existing, and unarmed with a force of argument to work conviction, the seriousness, perhaps sometimes harsh seriousness, of his friends, reiterating the assertion of his mind being in a fatal condition, till he should think and feel exactly as they did, was little likely to conciliate his repugnance. When, sometimes their admonitions took the mild or pathetic tone, his respect for their piety, and his gratitude for their affectionate solicitude, had perhaps a momentary effect to make him earnestly wish he could renounce his intellectual fastidiousness, and adopt in pious simplicity all their feelings and ideas. But as the contracted views, the rude figures, and the mixture of systematic and illiterate language, recurred, his mind would again revolt, and compel him to say, This cannot, will not, be my mode of religion.

Now, one wishes there had been some enlightened friend to say to such a man, Why will you not understand that there is no necessity for this to be *the mode* of your religion? By what want of acuteness do you fail to distinguish between the mode, (a mere extrinsic and accidental mode,) and the substance? In the world of nature you see the same elements wrought into the plainest and the most beautiful, into the most diminutive and the most majestic forms. So the same simple principles of Christian truth may constitute the basis of a very inferior, or a very noble, order of ideas. The principles themselves have an essential quality which is not convertible; but they were not imparted to man to be fixed in the mind as so many bare scientific propositions, each confined to one single mode of conception, without any collateral ideas, and to be always expressed in one unalterable form of words. They are placed there in order to spread out, if I might so express it, into a great multitude and diversity of ideas and feelings. These ideas and feelings, forming round the pure simple principles, will correspond, and will make those principles themselves *seem* to correspond, to the meaner or the more dignified intellectual rank of the mind. Why will you not perceive, that if the subject takes so humble a style in its less intellectual believers, it is not that it cannot unfold "greater proportions through a